

If you are assaulted:

● Get to a safe place. ● Do not shower, bathe, douche, wash your hands, brush your teeth, or use the toilet. ● Don't change or destroy clothing. ● Don't straighten up. ● As hard as it may be not to clean up, you may destroy important evidence if you do. ● Get medical attention as soon as possible. ● Contact a friend or family member you trust or call your local Rape Crisis Hotline for support and information.

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Reading this will help.

Emergency rooms of hospitals are busy places. It would be nice to say that you will be treated immediately, but this is not always the case. It may be some time before you are treated. You may wish to read this booklet and decide whether or not to report the assault to law enforcement. You may also wish to notify someone who can help you or be with you. You may want to ask someone to bring you a change of clothes, because your clothing may be needed for evidence.



There are four important reasons why you need medical attention:

1 To determine if you have been injured in any way. Frequently following an assault, the survivor is in a state of shock and may be totally unaware of any injuries.

2 To ease any fears you may have about venereal disease, pregnancy, injuries and to take the first step towards regaining control of your life.

3 To be tested for and to discuss preventing unwanted pregnancy or venereal disease.

4 To collect medical evidence for possible further prosecution if and when a suspect is caught.

It is vital that this evidence be collected *as soon as possible*. It will be destroyed as time passes and you begin to resume everyday activities (eating, drinking, urinating, bathing, etc.)

ANY WAIT, no matter how short or how long, may be uncomfortable. You may want to use this time to concentrate on yourself and your health. You are the survivor of a sexual assault and you have the right to whatever medical treatment you need.

The questions you will be asked:

Why are you here?

Name

Address

Age

Occupation

This is very important information which will be used to begin your medical report. Although it seems trivial after what you have been through, please provide as much information as you can.

You may find it difficult to explain your needs to the nurse. Although you do not need to give the nurse all the details of the assault, **you will have to say you were sexually assaulted in order to receive the proper treatment.**

You may also be approached by a social worker or victim advocate who will want to listen to your needs or fears and help in whatever way possible. The social worker or victim advocate may be accompanied by a registered nurse. They will ask questions in order to determine what treatment is necessary for you.

You have the right to be accompanied through each medical procedure by the social worker, victim advocate, or registered nurse present and by a friend or relative of your choice. You also have the right to choose total privacy in the emergency room treatment. This means that you can ask anyone other than the necessary hospital personnel to leave the room during the examination.

You are the evidence:

You will be provided with consent forms for taking medical evidence. If you need help in filling out the forms or have any questions, be sure to ask someone. Even if you do not want to report the assault to law enforcement at this time, it is a good idea to let the doctor or nurse collect all possible evidence. If you decide to report later, the collected evidence may be useful.

Law enforcement believes that it is best for victims to report as soon as possible. Many victims who do not immediately report sexual assault change their minds and report later. Many victims choose not to report the assault.

Give yourself time to make this important decision. It does not need to be made in the emergency room.

The medical treatment you may receive should include the following but not necessarily in this order:

- *After all the paperwork is completed, you will be asked to undress. If you are wearing the clothes you wore at the time of the assault, these clothes will be taken to be used as evidence. Carefully remove all clothing and fold each piece separately. Take special care to fold all underwear carefully. The nurse should put these items in a brown paper bag. The brown paper bag will be sealed and given to the police.*

- As part of medical evidence collection, you will be asked to sit on a piece of paper and use a small plastic comb to comb your pubic hair. The loose hairs that fall onto the paper will be put in an envelope and kept as evidence. You may be asked to pull hairs from your head. These will be put in a separate envelope.
- Your blood pressure, pulse, temperature and your medical history--allergies, medicines, last menstrual period, etc.--should be taken. At this time you should be told what to expect during the examination. If not, ask someone to explain it.
- Before the examination you will be asked about the sexual assault. It is very important that you tell someone what sexual acts were performed (vaginal intercourse, oral copulation, anal intercourse, or any other sexual acts). You may want to point to pictures rather than talk in detail about what happened. You may not understand the questions or you may feel embarrassed when you answer them. **It is alright to feel uncomfortable.** Let the nurse or doctor know of your discomfort and feel free to ask questions as needed. You are not expected to know all the medical terms, so do not be afraid to ask for explanations.

What will the exam be like?

Before beginning the exam you may be asked to sign a consent form so that pictures can be taken of torn clothing or visible injuries. These photographs can be used as evidence. Sometimes bruises show up 6 to 21 days after the assault. If bruises appear, call the sexual assault investigators handling your case so pictures can be taken. Whether pictures are taken at the hospital or later at the police station, you may want someone supportive with you. It is your right to have such a support person present.

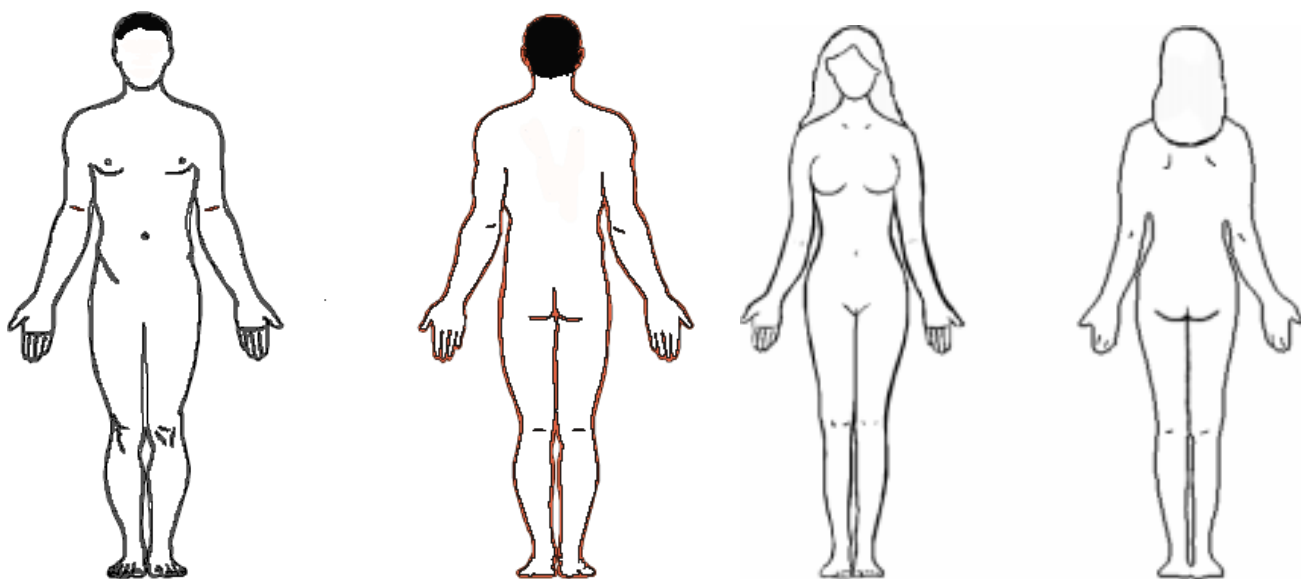
Now the doctor or a nurse specifically trained in sexual assault examination (SANE) will listen to your heart and lungs, press on your abdomen and back, examine your chest, and check for general signs of injury. If you have any areas of pain, soreness, or discomfort, be sure to mention them to the doctor or nurse at this time. Marks and bruises should be noted on your medical chart.

Following the general examination, a pelvic (or internal) exam will be done on female victims. The exam for male victims will be similar to the one for female victims, except for the vaginal examination.

For females, the pelvic exam will be almost identical to the exam you have probably received from your own doctor. If you have never had a pelvic exam, be sure to tell the doctor or SANE. The doctor will ask and need to know (for purposes of medical treatment) whether or not you were a virgin before you were sexually assaulted.

You will be asked to lie flat on the examining table and place your legs in metal foot-rests with your knees apart. You will be asked to slide to the edge of the examining table. Try to relax your stomach and back muscles and breathe slowly and deeply through your mouth. This will help you to relax your muscles and make the exam more comfortable.

Many women find this position very distressful and uncomfortable, especially following a sexual assault. Since this procedure is very similar to the assault you have just endured, you may find yourself losing control of your emotions. It is alright to cry and let your feelings out. You may want to ask the doctor or SANE to wait a moment before the examination continues.



Counting to four each time you breathe in and out can reduce your anxiety and take your mind off the exam. You might also try thinking about some very happy time or event in your life. You may want to squeeze the hand of a nurse or support person, ask questions in order to understand what is happening, or close your eyes and put cotton in your ears to block out the sights and sounds. Ask for whatever support you think will help you get through what can be a stressful time. Even though it may seem like hours, the pelvic exam is usually over in 5 to 10 minutes.

The doctor or nurse will look for bruises, cuts, marks, blood and traces of semen on the outside of your vaginal area. The doctor will then insert a metal or plastic speculum into the vagina. The speculum is an instrument which is used in routine pelvic examinations; it is used to open the internal area for examination. If you can relax and breathe deeply when the doctor puts it in this will help to decrease any discomfort.

Now the doctor or nurse will take the evidence. It will be given to the police if you are reporting this violent crime. If not, the evidence should be stored at the hospital for at least one month in case you later decide to report.

Taking specimens will be painless and involves merely wiping cotton swabs over the inside of the vagina and washing the vagina with a little water. After the doctor or nurse have taken this evidence, the speculum will be removed. The doctor or nurse will then examine you with two fingers in your vagina and one hand on your stomach in order to find out if you have any injuries. Finally the doctor or nurse will perform a brief rectal exam by placing one finger in your rectum. This will complete the pelvic examination. Evidence may also be taken by swabs from your mouth, rectum or where any other dried semen is visible.

Part of the examination includes a test for sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhea, herpes, etc. The results of this test should be ready in three to four days. Check with the Emergency Room for the test results. However, you can ask immediately for medication to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. These tests must be repeated. If you move, give the hospital staff a phone number or address where you can be reached or be sure that you call the hospital for your test results.

Female victims should be asked to give a urine sample for a pregnancy test. You should also be offered options for the prevention of pregnancy. If those options are not offered, ask someone about them. Chances of becoming pregnant are small but you may want to talk about possible pregnancy and your options with a rape crisis counselor.

If you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time of the attack, you may feel that your ability to resist the assault was impaired. You can ask the doctor or nurse to take a blood and urine test for traces of alcohol or drugs. You may want to use the test results at a later date if you report the crime and your case goes to court.

Follow-up treatment:

Your first follow-up appointment should be made two weeks after your emergency room examination. This appointment is necessary for taking another sexually transmitted disease test and/or another pregnancy test.

Your second follow-up appointment should be made six weeks after your emergency room examination (four weeks after your first follow-up appointment). This appointment is necessary for taking yet another pregnancy test and/or another blood test for syphilis.

These follow-up appointments can be made with your personal doctor, a women's clinic or a free clinic, as well as a hospital, but they must be made, to insure that you receive the appropriate medical treatment.

The SANE Nurse

What is a sexual assault nurse examiner?

During the medical exam, you may be attended by a sexual assault nurse examiner, or SANE. This person, usually female, is a registered nurse who has been specially trained to provide complete care to survivors of sexual assault. She is often certified by her local institution after completing a training program of approximately 40 hours. Many of these nurses work together with medical facilities by working on an on-call basis. (Some hospitals that see large numbers of rape victims have their own SANE program.)

Whenever a sexual assault survivor comes to the emergency room of a hospital, the staff pages the SANE on call. While the staff may treat urgent physical injuries immediately and make the survivor comfortable, all additional services are provided by the SANE when she arrives.

The survivor who is examined by a sexual assault nurse examiner is ensured that s/he is working with an individual who has up-to-date information on all aspects of care and is also familiar with the legal system and can give the survivor accurate information about her/his options and what happens if s/he does decide to report the rape. The nurse can help her/him anticipate potential problems and avoid them when possible. Most importantly, the survivor has someone available who understands what s/he is going through and is there to help.

How could this happen to me?

There are many notions of what rape is, who gets raped, who the rapist is, and where such crimes occur. Many of us have never really thought about attacks until they happen to us. And after a sexual assault, many of us still think, "If only I had...I wouldn't have been raped."

Maybe if we knew some of the facts about rape, we would learn that we as victims/survivors are not to blame.



MYTH	REALITY
It could never happen to me.	<i>Everyone</i> is a potential rape victim: females/males of any age, race, class, religion, occupation, education, or sexual preference.
Most rapes occur as a "spur of the moment" act in a dark alley by a stranger.	Most rapes are planned and often occur in one's home. Many times the offender is a relative, friend, neighbor, or other acquaintance of the victim. A rapist will rape again and again, generally in the same area of town and in the same manner.
Rape is primarily a sexual crime	Rape is a violent assault that is acted out sexually. It violates not only the victim's personal integrity, but also her/his sense of safety and control over life.
Women secretly want to be raped.	Fantasy is not the real thing, and women who do fantasize about rape usually think of rape only as aggressive sex. Their fantasies do not reflect what rape really is: a violent, often brutal, terrorizing, and humiliating assault. Fantasizing is just that: a <u>fantasy</u> . It does <u>not</u> mean that a woman wants the fantasy to occur in reality.
A rapist is easy to spot in a crowd.	Most rapists appear to be normal. Most are married and young. They can be of any race, color or economic class.

Understanding the facts can help you deal with sexual assault. You can discuss your own feelings and ideas about rape with rape crisis counselors who know the realities of sexual assault.

MYTH	REALITY
Most rapes are interracial.	The overwhelming majority of rapes involve persons of the same race or culture.
Rape is a non-violent crime.	Rape is a violent crime--87% of rapists either carry a weapon or threaten the victim with violence or death. Forcible rape is increasing in this country, more than any other violent crime.
Rape happens only to young women.	Rape occurs to victims of all ages. In the U.S., there are reports of rape victims ranging in age from 4 months to 92 years. Rape is an act of force for which everyone must be prepared. People of all ages, socio-economic groups, neighborhoods and lifestyles can be victims.
Some victims are "asking for it" by the way they dress or by their actions.	Again, most rapes are planned. Research shows that rapists are looking for available, vulnerable targets, not victims who dress or behave in a particular way. No person asks to be hurt or degraded.
It is not really possible to rape a non-consenting adult.	It is indeed possible to rape a non-consenting adult. Fear of death, threat of violence, or physical brutality can immobilize anyone.
There is no way to guarantee that sexual assaults will never happen.	There are ways to reduce the risk of another assault and increase awareness, sensitivity and safety. For example, there are self-defense classes which help teach one to be alert, fend off an attack, and aid others in crisis.

What are my rights?

Many survivors of violent crimes, and especially survivors of sexual assaults, experience emotional shock. At this time it is important for you to know that victims can become survivors. Part of this process is making every attempt you can to take control of your life again and being certain that you are receiving the care, information and rights to which you are entitled. By exercising your rights you are, in effect, taking charge again.



As a survivor:

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to determine whether or not you want to report the sexual assault to law enforcement.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to request to be interviewed by a female officer if you decide to make a report.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to report but not to proceed with prosecution.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to withdraw your testimony against the assailant at any time.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to reasonable protection by the law. In some cases you may be entitled to request any one or more of the following:

- *escort to accompany you to and from court;*
- *additional patrol from the police car(s) assigned to your area;*
- *restraining order(s);*
- *under severe circumstances--relocation.*

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to be treated in a considerate and sensitive manner by law enforcement and prosecution personnel.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to sue a person or company for negligence if you were sexually assaulted in a place having unsafe conditions (apartment building or parking lot, for example).

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to contact and be contacted (where and when you wish) by law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to obtain copies of police reports regarding the sexual assault.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT not to be exposed to prejudice because of your race, age, gender, class, lifestyle, or occupation.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to be considered a rape survivor regardless of the relationship of the assailant to you (i.e. spouse, acquaintance, relative, etc.).

As a patient:

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to gentleness and sensitivity during your medical examination.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to call your personal physician to attend you.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to refuse the collection of medical evidence, even though you may request venereal disease and/or pregnancy tests.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to privacy during the collection of medical evidence. Even though you may be a minor, you have the right to have the examination without a parent or guardian present.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to request that law enforcement officers leave the examining room.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to request that a friend, family member, or rape crisis counselor accompany you in the examination room.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to have each procedure explained in detail before it is done.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to an explanation of the reason for every test, form, and procedure.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to copies of your medical reports.

As a witness:

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to be asked only those questions that are relevant to a court case.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to attend all court proceedings which are not closed to you as a witness or to the public.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to a translator in court if you do not speak English.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to any court records which are public.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to have your own attorney present during the proceedings. If you are a minor, you have the right to testify in closed chambers or to have your parents excused from the courtroom during your testimony.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to sue the assailant in civil proceedings.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to make application for reimbursement through Crime Victims' Compensation for certain legal expenses. You also have the right to copies of documents or correspondence relating thereto.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to be informed of the parole date and release from jail if your assailant is found guilty and sent to prison.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to have someone with you (a friend, relative, advocate, etc.) at police and court proceedings such as line-up identifications or Court hearings.

You have the right to survive.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT not to be asked questions about prior sexual experience with anyone other than the defendant. It is important to remember that you are entitled to and should demand to be kept

informed of proceedings and reports, whether they are legal or medical. Also be sure you know your rights and get all medical and psychological care that you may need.

Finally...you have the right to survive, which means that you have the right to request everything that you need in making the transition from victim to survivor.

Do I have to report this to the police?

Before your physical examination in the emergency room, you may have contacted law enforcement officers. If you did not, it is important for you to understand that most hospitals automatically contact law enforcement once you are there. This does not mean that you are obligated to make a crime report.



Should you choose to report, you or someone acting on your behalf can contact law enforcement by telephone. Your name (or the name of the person calling for you) does not have to be given. While you may seek assistance in contacting law enforcement, you are the only one who can make the initial crime report and decide how to report the crime.

If you decide to report the assault, the first step is a crime report, which may be made before or after the physical examination in the emergency room. Within a few days after the initial report, special sexual assault investigators may call you into their office or come to you for a follow-up report. You must be truthful in each statement you make in any law enforcement or judicial proceedings. Inaccurate or incorrect information may cause law enforcement to follow false leads. If you are not certain of something, be sure to say so. If you do not know something exactly, describe as accurately as possible. Law enforcement officers will ask you questions regarding your name, address, phone number, and place of business. If you are unemployed, say so. Do not worry about your unemployment or resident status.

The officers are not there to judge you. They are there to obtain information about the crime: the date and the time of the occurrence, location, description of the suspect, etc. You will also be asked about your activities before and after the assault.

They will also need to know whether any penetration occurred and what sexual acts were forced upon you to determine what crimes can be charged. The slightest penetration may result in an assault charge rather than an attempted assault charge. Again, you must be truthful in your statements even though you may be embarrassed. Remember, it is not you who did these things, but the assailant. The information you provide is the basis of a legal proceeding and must be accurate. You have the right to read over everything the law enforcement officers write on forms and to ask them to correct any misinformation. This only applies to the information which you have provided, you cannot see information or testimony someone else has given. Be certain to get the NAMES, BADGE NUMBERS, and TELEPHONE NUMBERS of officers.

If you remember something later that you may not have told the law enforcement officers, call them with the information.

Also, do not worry if you remember details a little differently later on; this is not at all uncommon and will not hurt your case.

Law enforcement officers should not ask you questions about your emotional or physical reaction at the time of the assault. (They should not ask, "Did you enjoy it?", "Climax?," etc.) In some cases, law enforcement officers may ask questions about your mental state in order to determine whether or not you may need to be referred for counseling to help you deal with the emotional reaction to the assault.

In making the decision of whether or not to report the crime, keep the following facts in mind:

Advantages:

- *If you report the crime and the suspected rapist is caught and convicted, you may have protected others from falling victim to the rapist. Also, your reporting may help to strengthen another survivor's report.*
- *You will be eligible for Crime Victims' Compensation provided by the State of Texas.*
- *You can request assistance throughout the trial process from Victim Advocates and/or Crisis Counselors.*

Disadvantages:

- It may be difficult for you to repeat your story for what seems to be many times to law enforcement officers and in court.
- Even if you report the crime and choose to press charges, the District Attorney has the right to decide whether or not to prosecute the case. If the D.A. does not file, you are entitled to know why.
- Fewer than one out of five cases goes to trial, and fewer result in conviction. This does not mean that your particular case will not be filed, but the statistics are not encouraging at this point.
- It may be emotionally difficult for you because telling the story over and over may cause you to relive the assault experience.

Usual order of events in a criminal proceeding:

- You file a crime report with law enforcement.
- You may look at mugshots or assist in making a composite picture.
- A suspect may be arrested.
- You may be required to identify the suspect in a line-up.
- Law enforcement presents the case to the District Attorney.
- You may be interviewed by the District Attorney's Office.
- District Attorney decides whether there is enough admissible evidence to present case to the Grand Jury.
- If indicted and if suspect pleads not guilty, several hearings will be set which the suspect must attend. You may be subpoenaed to appear at these hearings.
- Trial (you are required to attend)
- Acquittal or sentencing

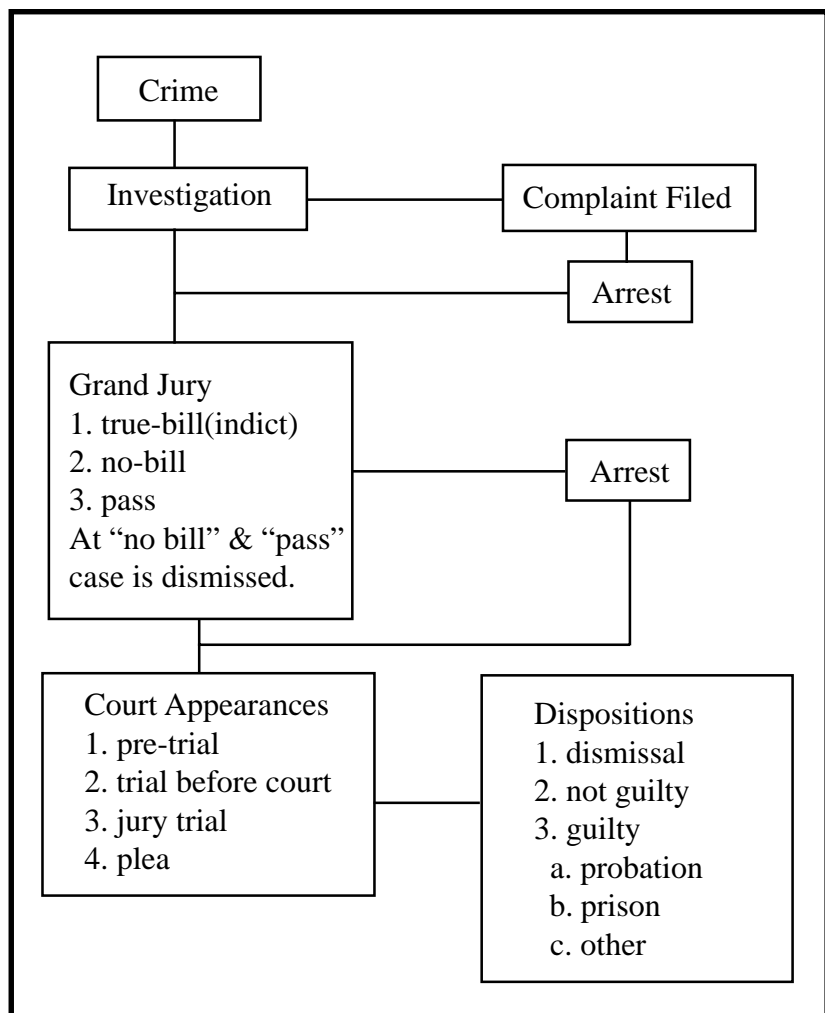
What happens in court?

If the suspect is caught and the case against the suspect proceeds to court, you will be subpoenaed to testify as a witness at a preliminary hearing. A subpoena is a court order requiring your attendance in court on a certain date and time. Please read the subpoena carefully and be certain to appear at the place, date, and time noted. If you have any questions or problems about the subpoena, call the District Attorney's Office or the Victim/Witness Division. It is always best to call the District Attorney's Office the day before your appearance is required. They can advise you of any delays in the proceed-

ings and prevent you from making any unnecessary trips.

In court, it will not be you vs. the rapist. Your role is as a witness. The "people of the state" prosecute the suspect because the suspect is charged with committing a criminal act under the Penal Codes of the State. The attorney prosecuting the case against the suspect is an Assistant District Attorney. It is unlikely that the same attorney will present the case from the first proceeding through the final sentencing. You have the right to have your own attorney present if you wish.

The preliminary hearing is generally a short process in which only the basic details of the crime are disclosed. What must be established is that the assault occurred and that there is reason to believe that this suspect did it without your free consent.



Between the preliminary hearing and the actual trial, many delays may occur; most are requested by the defense (the attorney representing the defendant). It may take a long time before the trial actually begins. This is not uncommon. Very few cases actually go to jury trial. Many defendants "plead" after the preliminary hearing. In these cases, the preliminary hearing may be the only appearance required of you.

Should a trial occur, the case is usually decided by a jury based upon witnesses' testimony and the physical evidence. For a defendant to be convicted, the jury must decide that the defendant is guilty "beyond a reasonable doubt." Because such a decision is being made, the defense attorney has the right to ask you questions. S/he may suggest that you are mistaken in your identification of the defendant.

S/he may suggest that you are lying for some reason. Remember, you are telling the truth. The defense attorney is doing his or her job in representing the defendant. A sentencing hearing may follow the trial. This is an open, public hearing you may want to attend.

In an effort to feel more comfortable in the courtroom and to have a better understanding of the criminal proceedings, you may wish to contact the District Attorney's Office, Victim/Witness Division, your legal or medical advocate, or your counselor.

Can I file a civil suit?

One last thought...you may be unhappy with the criminal proceedings. You may want to sue the assailant for damages. You may want to file a civil suit before, during, or after the criminal proceedings. Unlike the criminal proceedings, which require testimony and evidence showing the defendant as guilty "beyond a reasonable doubt," the civil proceedings only require "a preponderance of evidence." You will have to retain your own attorney or go to Small Claims Court. Also, if you were assaulted in an area such as a parking lot or structure, you may be able to sue the owner(s) for negligence. Discuss these matters with an attorney.

Does anyone know how I feel?

The experience of sexual assault has different meanings for each person. No one knows precisely how an individual will react, but rape crisis counselors have found that most people experience sexual assault as a severe emotional and physical violation. This section will help you sort out and understand some of what you may be feeling right now, or what you may feel in the future.

Rape is a violent act of domination and humiliation in which the victim is without power or free will. Following such an experience, it is natural to feel frightened and powerless. You may have believed that you were going to be killed, and thinking of this can leave you feeling vulnerable. You may also feel a sense of having lost control over your life, or a sense of shock and disbelief.

What am I feeling?

SOMEHOW, SOMEWAY I lived through the experience of a sexual assault. I didn't know whether I would and maybe I didn't even know if I wanted to, but I did. Now I face people and I wonder what they think. Maybe they wonder whether I was careful enough, whether I provoked it in some way, whether I fought hard enough. Maybe I wonder the same things.

I can't handle or cope with other people and their thoughts right now. I have so much to think about but I don't want to think about any of it. I've lost all of my normal thoughts and concerns right now and everything is focused on myself and safety.

AND HIM! I want to do something terrible to him... maybe sometimes, even to myself. Will he come back? **AM I SAFE?** Oh, I feel so helpless! I feel I lost control of my life and I feel like I'm going crazy. But what about those who depend on me? Can I cope? I also wonder about being intimate with someone again. I don't want to be touched and I'm not ready to talk about any of this.

I'm rambling on because I can't seem to concentrate or care about other things or matters like before. Is that wrong? Who knows how I'll be able to sleep at night? **How am I going to go on?** How am I going to be able to care for those who depend on me?

**I WANT TO FORGET
I WANT TO ESCAPE
I WANT MY LIFE BACK IN ORDER
WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME?**



Restoring feelings of control is important. By making decisions (regarding your medical examination or reporting the crime, for example) you can regain some control you may feel was taken from you.

Following a sexual assault, you may find your lifestyle disrupted in a number of ways.

You may have difficulty concentrating. You may feel the need to change jobs or to move. You may also experience a loss of appetite, depression, or nightmares. Some victims fear being alone, others are afraid to be in crowds. All of these are common reactions.

These feelings can occur one or many at a time. They can come and go. Some survivors try to block out the painful memories. Others need to talk about their experience over and over again. All of this is part of what is commonly called Rape Trauma Syndrome.

Many survivors have found it helpful to know how others have reacted to a sexual assault. This gives them some idea of what they can expect.

Because rape is the only crime in which the victim is often treated as the guilty party, it is understandable that many survivors experience guilt feelings. These feelings can be especially strong if you knew your assailant. You may feel guilty because you were not able to foresee or stop the assault. It is important to remember that:

- *It was not your fault. No one asks to be raped.*
- *A sexual assault is the only crime in which the victim may be treated as the accused.*
- *Other people often try to make the survivor feel guilty in order to reduce their own feelings of vulnerability.*
- *Rape is not an act of lust but one of aggression, humiliation, and power.*

Common reactions to sexual assault:

EMOTIONAL	I feel so numb.
SHOCK	Why am I so calm? Why can't I cry?
DISBELIEF	Did it really happen? Why me?
EMBARRASSMENT	What will people think? No, I can't tell my family.
SHAME	I feel so dirty, like there is something wrong with me now. I want to wash my hands all day long.
GUILT	I feel as if I did something to make this happen to me. If only I had...
DEPRESSION	How am I going to go on? I feel so tired and hopeless.
POWERLESSNESS	Will I ever feel in control again?
DISORIENTATION	I can't sit still. I'm having trouble getting through the day. I'm just overwhelmed!
RE-TRIGGERING	I keep having flashbacks. I wish they would stop.
DENIAL	Wasn't it "just" a rape?
FEAR	I'm afraid of so many things. Will I get pregnant or get V.D.? Am I safe? Can people tell what's happened to me? Will I ever want to be intimate again? Will I ever get over this? I'm afraid I'm going crazy. I have nightmares that terrify me.
ANXIETY	I'm a nervous wreck! I have trouble breathing. (Anxiety is often expressed in physical symptoms, like difficulty breathing or muscle tension, sleep disturbances, change in eating habits, nausea, stomach problems, nightmares, bedwetting.)
ANGER	I want to kill him!

How long will I feel this way?

Getting back to normal can take a long time and you may be wondering if there is anyone who can help.

Many survivors have found it helpful to talk to rape crisis counselors. They are trained to listen and will try to help you make your own decisions and deal with your feelings in a way that is best for you. You can find the telephone numbers of Rape Crisis Hotlines and Rape Treatment Centers in the section called: **Who can help me?**

How will my family and friends react?



Your family and friends will struggle with many feelings of their own at the same time you are struggling with yours. They may need assistance, too:

- *They may view sexual assault as a sex crime rather than a crime of violence and this misinformation needs to be corrected.*
- *They may mistakenly blame you or themselves for the assault.*
- *They may believe that not talking about feelings will make the feelings go away.*

After being sexually assaulted, you may have mixed feelings about telling your friends and family. You may also be extremely sensitive to the way they respond to you. At a time when you may need to talk out your feelings, others may have difficulty listening.

When you need to make your own decisions about reporting the assault or seeking other help, the important people in your life may seem to want to make decisions for you. When you want to be comforted because of the violence you experienced, your spouse or partner may pressure for more physical intimacy than you desire. Friends or family may ask questions about the assault that indicate a lack of understanding of what it was like for you. It is up to you to decide who and what to tell. However, it is also very important for you to have a support system you can turn to, and family and

friends are often able to fulfill this need. A spouse or partner may avoid closeness with you or may feel that immediate intimacy will erase the trauma of the assault. Loved ones may become overprotective in trying to cope with their own feelings of fear, powerlessness, and helplessness.

Understanding the feelings of your loved ones does not mean that you must take responsibility for helping them cope with their feelings when you need to be dealing with your own. However, talking about feelings directly, perhaps with the support of an outside person, can help everyone.

Someone I care about was assaulted...What can I do to help?



It is normal for you to feel upset and confused. At a time when you may want most to help the survivor through this crisis, you will be dealing with a crisis of your own.

It is not uncommon to be confused about sexual assault and perhaps to wonder if the survivor could have prevented it. You may find it difficult to listen when the survivor needs to talk about feelings. You may hope that by not talking about the assault, the feelings both of you are having will go away. You may be tempted to make decisions for the survivor, or to be over-protective. You may want to hide the assault from others, fearing their reaction to the survivor and to you. You may want to resolve the crisis quickly; you may feel disturbed or confused when the survivor continues to be affected for weeks, months, or years.

Some spouses, or partners, may want more physical intimacy sooner than the survivor does. Others may feel repulsed by closeness. As a spouse, friend, or family member, you may feel guilty and responsible, believing that somehow you could have prevented the assault. You may also feel anger at the survivor or at everyone in general and a desire for revenge.

All of these feelings are understandable following the sexual assault of a loved one. If these feelings are hidden or expressed in hurtful ways, they can interfere with the resolution of your crisis and that of the survivor.

The survivor may need your support and understanding. However, you also need support and it is available.

Rape is a violent assault, not a sexually motivated or sexually gratifying act. The rapist's aim is to dominate, humiliate, control, and degrade his victim. However, because the same parts of the body are involved in sexual assault as in making love, many people confuse violence and sex. They may respond to a survivor of assault as if s/he had provoked, wanted, or enjoyed it.

In addition, some people do not understand a survivor's deep emotional upset and sense of

violation. Many people believe rape is not traumatic unless the survivor was a virgin or suffered severe and visible physical injury. Other people may not understand the importance of the survivor's making her/his own decisions and regaining control over her/his life.

Not understanding the reality of sexual assault can make the crisis more difficult for you and the survivor.

If children are involved, they may either know or sense that something has happened. It is important that they receive help to deal with their feelings, too. What children imagine is usually more frightening than knowing the facts. It is helpful if they are given the opportunity to

deal with their feelings.

The emotional impact of sexual assault does not disappear, and talking about feelings can help. It may also help to focus on what you can do to minimize the risk of future assaults. Making your home secure, learning self-defense, and talking with other people who have experienced a similar crisis may be helpful.

Rape hotline counselors are available to support you as well as the survivor. Your feelings of fear, anger, confusion, guilt, or powerlessness are normal. Counselors can assist you in dealing with your feelings and can answer questions about medical, legal, or other issues.

Many people confuse violence and sex; they do not understand a survivor's deep emotional upset and sense of violation.

Will I ever feel safe again?

Your concern for safety and self-protection is a normal and appropriate reaction.

I'm afraid to be alone.

Your fear is natural. After being sexually assaulted, you may also feel humiliated, degraded and depressed. You may want to isolate yourself even if you are afraid to be alone. These feelings are common and it is helpful to your recovery to deal with them. A rape crisis hotline or crisis counseling center may be able to help you deal with these feelings whenever they arise.

I wonder if I'll ever feel safe again.

It is very common for you to feel afraid, especially in circumstances similar to those under which the assault occurred (i.e., same place, same time of day, etc.) Most people find that they begin to feel safer after a period of time. The length of this period varies. Again, fear for your safety is a very normal reaction. A supportive, non-judgmental listener can help you deal with this normal reaction.

I'm afraid my attacker will return.

Although many rapists threaten to return, in reality very few ever do. Still, the threat itself can be frightening. Taking the precautions to make yourself and your home safer is one way of dealing with such a threat and the fear it causes. See the suggestions listed below for specific actions you can take.

I'm considering purchasing tear gas or a gun to protect myself.

It is not uncommon after a sexual assault to want to purchase a weapon. It's a good idea to consider the following before making a decision.

- *Tear gas cannisters, guns, knives, hat pins, etc., can all be taken away and used against you. Also, tear gas cannisters may malfunction at any time. In fact, several types of cannisters have been recalled.*



- *You may not have your tear gas or other weapon with you when you need it.*
- *Approximately half of all assailants are known by the survivor.*
- *Children can find weapons and hurt themselves accidentally.*

As an alternative to weapons, you may want to enroll in self-defense courses. A good instructor can help turn fear into anger and then into action. You can learn how to use awareness, assertiveness, and physical action to defend yourself. Learning self-defense is one way of dealing with fear and anxiety. What you learn becomes part of you and you always have it with you.

I don't feel safe at home.

Whether or not you were attacked in your home, you may not feel safe there, especially if you live alone. Many sexual assault survivors share this feeling. Some have found it helpful to stay with a supportive

friend or relative until they feel less frightened, or until they are able to move or make their homes safer. Talking with a rape crisis counselor can help you determine the options available to you (i.e., asking a friend or relative to stay with you, going to a hotel or motel, moving, etc.)

I'm frightened when I go out of my house.

It is not unusual for a rape survivor to temporarily lose a sense of personal safety when out of the house. Becoming familiar with self-protection strategies (see below) and being alert can help you regain a feeling of safety outside the home.

Fear is a very normal, natural, and common reaction to a sexual assault. Many survivors look for immediate solutions, like the suggestions that follow. Sometimes reading these suggestions can create a sense of guilt. You may think you could have prevented the assault. Remember, the responsibility for a sexual assault lies with the perpetrator.

Safety at home:

- *Install locks on all doors and windows. Use them.*
- *Know your neighbors, especially those who can be called in an emergency. Having emergency signals worked out (i.e., whistle blasts during the day, flashing lights at night) can help. Working with the Neighborhood Watch can also be effective.*
- *Avoid places where attackers might hide (bushes, alleys, etc.)*
- *Maintain good visibility around the home. Trim shrubs and trees.*
- *Make sure all areas are well lighted.*
- *Install a peep-hole in your front door. If you can't install a peephole, always ask "Who's there?" before opening the door. Many women*

also call out "I'll get it, Jack!" to suggest they are not alone.

- *Before opening the door to any guest or repairman, demand identification from the person at your door. It is wise to check this identification by phone or ask a neighbor to keep you company while the repairman or guest is in your home.*

- *Teach children not to open the door to anyone or tell any phone caller that they are alone, where you are or where you will be.*

- *If you are a renter, you may request, in writing, that your landlord repair or install locks on doors and windows. Your landlord is responsible for keeping such areas as the front and back of the building, hallways and courtyards well lighted.*

Safety on the street:

Research has shown that people who stand straight, walk with a firm step, look ahead rather than down, and act like they know where they are going are less likely to be seen as possible victims.

It is not necessary to stop and be polite when a stranger or slight acquaintance asks a question in a public place. It's okay to answer "I don't know" and walk on, or not to answer at all. It is not necessary to let anyone force you into an association you don't want. Repeating firmly and with conviction "No, I don't want to do that!" has worked for some people.

- *Keep one hand free when carrying packages.*
- *Avoid dark, empty places.*
- *Listen for footsteps. Turn around if you think you are being followed and check. If you think someone is following you, cross the street, yell, and if possible, run to the nearest lighted area where there are other people.*
- *Have door keys and car keys ready before you get home or get to your car.*

- *Avoid walking alone if you are distracted, upset, or under the influence of any substance which might impair your action.*

Be especially alert in elevators, parking structures, supermarket parking lots, and laundromats. Enter these places with a friend or co-worker whenever possible.

Safety while traveling by car or by bus:

- *Always check the front and back seat of your car before entering. If someone is in your car, leave immediately.*
- *Make sure your gas tank is not empty.*
- *Keep car doors locked at all times.*
- *Keep car windows mostly closed when driving.*
- *If you are followed, blow your horn and drive to a police station, if possible.*
- *When waiting for the bus, stand behind the bus bench balanced and ready for action.*
- *Keep packages, purses, etc., tucked under your arm.*
- *Sit by the driver if unsure of the route.*
- *Stay awake in the bus.*
- *Have money for emergency calls.*
- *Notice who gets off at your stop.*

If you are feeling it is unfair to have to think about these safety tips all the time, **YOU ARE RIGHT**. However, it is important that you be as safe as possible. If your intuition tells you that something is wrong, or if you feel threatened or uncomfortable in ANY situation, make every attempt to get to a safer place as soon as possible. The two key words in self-protection are **AWARENESS** of surroundings and **ASSERTIVENESS** for yourself. Your brain is your best weapon.

Who pays for this?

As the victim of a violent crime such as rape or sexual assault, the injury you received because of the assault may require medical and/or psychological care. While the local police department provides and pays for the medical exam, you may ask the State of Texas to reimburse you for any medical, emotional, or financial losses you suffered as a result of being the victim of a violent crime, even if the physical and emotional problems do not develop immediately.



This section is a brief guide to help you decide whether you are eligible to file for reimbursement of the expenses you will have. If you have reported the crime to a law enforcement agency, you can file for Crime Victims' Compensation for those expenses that are not reimbursed by a third party. Your first source for reimbursement of your Emergency Room costs is any medical or hospital insurance you may have.

Note: To receive complete information about eligibility requirements, please contact the Crime Victims' Compensation Division at the Office of the Attorney General of Texas.

Basic Qualification Requirements:

Residency: The crime must occur in Texas to a Texas resident or a U.S. resident, or the crime must involve a Texas resident who becomes a victim in another state that does not have a crime victim compensation program for which the victim would be eligible.

Reporting the Crime: Reports must be made in a "reasonable period" after the incident unless the victim is under 18 years of age or there is a good reason why the crime was not reported within this time period.

Filing for Compensation: The application must be filed within a year of the crime unless the victim is under 18 years of age or there is a good reason why the application was not submitted within this time period.

Cooperation: The victim and/or claimant must cooperate fully with law enforcement officials in the investigation and prosecution of the case.

Who May Qualify:

- *An innocent victim of a violent crime who suffers physical and/or emotional harm or death.*
- *A person who legally assumes the obligations or voluntarily pays certain expenses related to the crime on behalf of the victim.*
- *Immediate family members needing counseling as a result of the crime against the victim.*
- *Household members related to victim by marriage or blood and requiring counseling as a result of crime against the victim.*

Who Is Not Eligible:

- *A victim whose own behavior contributed to the crime (in those cases, benefits may be reduced or denied).*
- *A victim or claimant who knowingly and willingly participated in the criminally injurious conduct.*
- *A victim or claimant who was engaged in illegal activity at the time of the crime.*
- *An offender or an accomplice of the offender.*
- *Anyone who was incarcerated in a penal institution when the crime occurred, or who was on probation or parole for a felony involving criminally injurious conduct.*
- *Victims of motor vehicle accidents.*

What Crimes Are Covered:

Sexual assault, kidnapping, aggravated robbery, assault, homicide and other violent crimes in which the victim is injured and suffers physical or emotional harm or death.

What Expenses Are Eligible:

Reimbursement for property damage or loss is not an eligible expense. Approved claims may be awarded compensation only if they are related to the crime.

Limits on Awards:

Total recovery may not exceed \$50,000 unless the victim suffered total and permanent disability. Victims who suffer total permanent disability as a result of their victimization may qualify for an additional \$25,000 which may only be used for costs associated with:

- *making a home or automobile accessible.*
- *providing job training and vocational rehabilitation training in the use of special appliances.*
- *home health care.*
- *reimbursement of lost wages.*

How to Apply:

Every law enforcement agency in Texas is required to provide victims of crime with information about the Crime Victims' Compensation program and an application. Applications are also available from prosecutors' offices. Their victim assistance coordinators are required to provide assistance to victims who ask for help filling out the form. Hospitals and medical centers may also have applications. You may also get an application directly from the Crime Victims' Compensation Division in the Office of the Attorney General by calling 1-800-983-9933.

What about me?

Due to special circumstances in your life, you may have questions or concerns that have not been discussed in this booklet. This section of the Survivor's Packet is for you. We hope you will find it helpful.



My child has been sexually assaulted...

Finding out that your child has been victimized can be overwhelming. What needs to be done immediately is to reassure your child that you:

- *believe what s/he has told you;*
- *know it is not her/his fault;*
- *are glad s/he has told you about it;*
- *are sorry about what happened;*
- *will do your best to protect and support her/him.*

Most parents do not realize that:

- *young children do not make up stories about what they have not experienced (i.e. sexual activity);*
- *children are **never** responsible for sexual assaults made against them;*
- *most children are afraid parents will punish them for reporting a sexual assault;*
- *sometimes parents' feelings of guilt and self-blame make them forget **who** has been victimized;*
- *children do best when parents are calm, caring and accepting.*

Many parents have not been taught the *facts* concerning the sexual abuse of children. See chart at right.

You may be unsure how to help your child. One important way is to quietly encourage your child to talk about the assault. It is important to do this gently and without pressure. If your child doesn't talk about the experience right away, you may want to provide an opportunity. ("If you don't feel like talking about this right now, I understand. But if it begins to trouble you, or you're thinking about it a lot, it's important that we talk about it.")

Myths & realities of child sexual assault:

MYTH	REALITY
Sexual assault of children is a relatively rare occurrence.	Child sexual assault is three times as common as child battery. Kinsey reported that 25% of American women had been molested during childhood. It is estimated that between 50% and 80% go unreported.
Child sexual assault is an isolated incident that happens out of the blue and is usually an extreme form of abuse.	On the contrary, this kind of abuse develops gradually over a period of time and generally will be repeated unless it is stopped. While the forms of abuse may become more serious as time goes on, the overwhelming majority are not of the torture/murder variety sensationalized in the media.
Assailants are strangers.	Between 75% and 80% of assailants are known to the family.
Child assaulters are psychotics or emotionally disturbed people whose sexual drive is misdirected towards children.	These offenders, the great majority male, are otherwise normal people who have difficulty controlling their aggressive--not sexual--impulses. Incest offenders have normal sexual relationships with adults. In one study, 31% of attacks involved verbal threats, 46% physical force. Child sexual assault, like adult rape, is a crime of violence, not sex.
Child victims are promiscuous and seductive, and adolescents in particular may provoke sexual assault by their behavior.	The Rape Prevention Study Center reports that the two kinds of assaults commonly committed by adults against children are forcible rape and coercion situations. Children do not ask to be abused. Responsibility for sexual assault lies with the adult, not the child.
Children make up stories to get back at someone or to gain attention.	Children rarely lie about sexual assault. Younger children do not understand what it is, and older children are often too embarrassed or frightened to disclose actual assaults, let alone make up false ones.
Telling children to avoid strangers and keeping them at home is a guarantee against sexual assault.	Again, 75% to 80% of assailants are known to the family; 60% of attacks occur in the victim's or assailant's home.
It will only traumatize children to frankly discuss assault with them.	Vague warnings like "don't take candy from strangers" can confuse and frighten children. If assault is presented as a safety issue, it is no more frightening than discussing fire or playground safety. Children's fantasies are often worse than the reality; concrete information sensitively presented can empower them and help rid them of nameless fears.
Children are powerless to protect themselves.	Children can be taught to use their own resources to protect themselves: to kick, yell, run, get help, etc. The key is that they know there is someone to whom they can turn for immediate and unquestioning help.

While making it clear that the fault lies with the offender, remember that often s/he is someone known to the child. (In fact, approximately 87% of the sexual assaults against children are by people known to them--very often a relative, neighbor, or friend of the family). It is normal to feel angry, but angry threats about what should happen to the offender (jail, etc.) might cause your child to feel guilty about having told. Your response should place the blame and responsibility with the offender in a realistic way: "What Uncle Johnny did was wrong. We're going to try to get him some help so he doesn't hurt you or anyone else again."

More than anything else, your child needs support, comfort and love now and in the future.

The decisions to be made after the sexual assault of a child are difficult ones. There are no right answers. Because sexual assault is so disruptive, you may also need support. It is important to unburden yourself of some of your feelings (guilt, anger, grief, etc.).

The most important consideration is to support your child emotionally. Talking to a counselor trained in child sexual assault can help you:

- *Sort out your own feelings.*
- *Determine what to do next.*
- *Make arrangements for follow-up medical care.*
- *Help everyone in your family (especially other children) deal with the assault.*
- *Help your child.*

Reporting Law: Texas law requires all professionals working with children to report suspected child abuse immediately or as soon as practically possible by phone to the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or to the local police department or Sheriff. The telephone report is to be followed by a written report within 36 hours to the agency to whom the telephone report is made. DHS and law enforcement are required to inform each other of all reports received. This law takes precedence over the confidentiality of the doctor/patient or counselor/client relationship. Failure to report is a misdemeanor and could also result in civil liability.

I am a teenager...

If you have been sexually assaulted, there are some things you need to know right away:

- *Rape is any sexual activity forced upon you against your will.*
- *What happened wasn't your fault, whether you were assaulted by a stranger or by someone you know.*
- *It's important that you get medical care as soon as possible.*
- *It's wise that you let someone you trust know what happened.*
- *Talking to someone you trust about your feelings is a good idea. It can help you feel better.*
- *You are not alone. It is estimated that 1/3 to almost 1/2 of all young people in the United States are sexually assaulted by the time they are 18. This could be by a stranger, acquaintance, date or relative.*

Perhaps the most difficult form of sexual abuse to deal with is incest. Nobody talks about it, but it can happen in any family. The offender can be a father, step-father, uncle, older brother or female relative. Usually the victim is a daughter. However, boys can be victims of incest, too. The most important things to remember are:

- *You are not to blame for what happened.*
- *There are people who will believe you.*
- *There are people who want to help.*

Remember: Parents or guardians do not have to be notified in order for you to receive medical care related to the assault, if the perpetrator is a relative.

I am a male survivor...

You have survived a violent attack. Some of your feelings may be the same as those of a female sexual assault survivor. You may feel:

- *guilt;*
- *powerlessness;*
- *concern regarding your safety.*

However, there are special issues which may be different for you; they include:

sexuality--masculinity;
medical procedures;
reporting to law enforcement;
telling others;
finding resources and support.

You need to know that strong or weak, outgoing or withdrawn, homosexual or heterosexual, old or young, attractive or unattractive, you have done nothing that justifies this violent attack. At no point and under no circumstances does anyone have the right to violate or control another's body. Sexual assault is a crime of violence and power, not lust or passion.

The special support you may need as a man may include:

calling a crisis line anonymously and requesting a male counselor;
requesting an older or male nurse;
finding a support group of male survivors.

As a man, many factors or fears may influence your decision to report or not report to law enforcement. There are both advantages and disadvantages if you choose to report.

Advantages:

- *you may apply for Crime Victims' Compensation.*
- *collection of medical evidence will be paid for.*
- *your report may help protect others.*

Disadvantages:

- *you may be treated in an insensitive manner.*
- *you may not be believed.*
- *the chances of prosecution are slim.*

Feeling responsible is a normal reaction to sexual assault. However, sexual assault is never the fault of the victim. You did nothing to deserve this. You may want to talk to someone about your feelings.

I am a lesbian survivor...

As a lesbian survivor, you can expect the same range of emotional responses to assault as any woman. However, because of the myths about sexual assault and about lesbianism, your concerns about how you will be treated may be intensified.

You may be concerned that you will be treated differently if you choose to disclose your sexual orientation and that your lesbianism may become the focus of treatment instead of the sexual assault. If you are not "out" to your friends, family, or employer, you may fear that disclosure may threaten your job as well as the support you need from your significant others. You may worry that public disclosure of your lifestyle may negatively affect your close friends or your children. And you may be concerned that caregivers who may be sensitive to the crisis of sexual assault may still hold distorted, judgmental ideas about lesbians.

On the other hand, if you choose not to disclose your sexual orientation, some of the questions you are asked by emergency room and law enforcement personnel may be difficult to answer. You will also be under the added emotional pressure of thinking carefully about the thoughts and feelings you

express openly at a time when it is very important to talk these out freely.

Whether you choose to disclose your sexual orientation or not, you are entitled to the same sensitive treatment as any woman. You may find it particularly helpful to contact a lesbian advocate or counselor who is also knowledgeable about the crisis of sexual assault and who can support you through your contacts with caregiving agencies and significant others.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to contact a rape crisis hotline before your medical examination or law enforcement contact and request the support of a lesbian advocate or counselor.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to request treatment by female hospital personnel (although this may result in delay of treatment).

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to privacy in the examining room, and you may request that law enforcement personnel not be present.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to refuse the taking of medical evidence even though you may request V.D. and pregnancy tests. (If your relationships are exclusively with women, concerns about pregnancy may be particularly upsetting for you, but the immediate and follow-up tests will insure your health and help you decide what you need to do).

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to request a female law enforcement officer if you choose to report the crime (although this, too, may result in delay).

You and your loved ones may need assistance in dealing with the many feelings that sexual assault brings. There are supportive services that are particularly sensitive to the needs of lesbian survivors and to their families, partners, and friends.

I am a senior survivor...

You may have thought this could never happen to you, but anyone--old or young, attractive or unattractive, rich or poor, living alone or with others--may be vulnerable to sexual assault.

Most rapes are planned. Anger and power, not sexual gratification, are the motivations for sexual assault. It is natural to feel guilty, but sexual assault is never the responsibility of the victim. You did nothing to provoke or cause this attack.

As a senior survivor, you may have special needs. Many survivors want to move following an assault. If you are living on a fixed income, this may be a problem for you. It may take you longer to recover from physical injuries and/or Rape Trauma Syndrome. In addition, you may experience more anxiety concerning:

self image: I have always tried to be a good person. I've lived through many things but I don't know if I can handle all of this.

safety: How can I protect myself? I have always been so careful; I never thought this could happen to me.

independence: I want to limit my activities now and stay at home. I want someone else to tell me what to do.

the medical exam: I haven't had a pelvic exam in years. I feel so ashamed.

physical injuries: It is taking so much time to heal. I feel bruised and sore all over and I'm worried about my health.

oral copulation: I feel so nauseated. I hate to think about what happened.

anal intercourse: Not only do I hurt, but the thought of what happened disgusts me.

talking about it: I don't know if I should tell my children. I don't want to upset them.

You can call a rape crisis hotline for information, counseling, or to ask for someone to keep you company in the emergency room. Senior escort services are available for medical follow-up treatment. It may be helpful if those close to you talk with specially trained counselors as well.

I have a disability...

Here are some common myths which may influence the way others respond to you following a sexual assault. They may also influence the way you feel and your own understanding of what has happened to you.

MYTH: The disabled are powerless, helpless, and possibly childlike. They do not relate to others normally. They do not know how to protect themselves.

REALITY: The disabled have certain limitations but usually develop other resources and capabilities that make them far from helpless.

MYTH: The disabled person who is sexually assaulted, especially if blind, deaf, or emotionally disabled, is not likely to be able to effectively cooperate in efforts to apprehend or prosecute her/his assailant.

REALITY: The disabled have been able to effectively cooperate in prosecuting assailants, using their unimpaired abilities. Being blind, deaf, or emotionally disabled does not necessarily hinder successful prosecution.

MYTH: The disabled are likely to be considered "unattractive" and therefore not subject to sexual assault.

REALITY: Rape is an act of violence not motivated by sexual attraction. Any person can be the target of a sexual assault.

MYTH: The disabled are seen as asexual and, if assaulted, will react to it very differently than other people.

REALITY: The disabled are not asexual. The reactions of a disabled survivor will be similar to those of any other survivor, although the trauma of being overpowered may be greater in some cases. In cases of sexual assault, degradation, humiliation, and power are the issues... not lust or passion.

Some of the realities of dealing with sexual assault for the disabled are:

- *Support people may believe in the myths listed above. You will have to re-educate them at a time when you are under great stress.*
- *Your hard-won self-confidence in your ability to live independently may be temporarily undermined.*
- *Feelings of fear and helplessness may be particularly strong.*
- *Support people may become overly protective.*

Trained counselors and care providers can often assist you with such issues as:

- *Finding suitable housing arrangements;*
- *Asserting your rights to privacy;*
- *Locating a wide range of special services.*

Self-defense training for wheelchair users and virtually all other disability groups is available, and has proven very effective.

I was assaulted by someone I know...

Acquaintance rape happens more often than stranger rape. The assailant might be an acquaintance, co-worker, friend-of-a-friend, social contact, or relative. He might be someone you barely recognize or

Acquaintance rape is not just "forced sex" or seduction; it is rape.

someone you know well.

Many women in particular mistakenly believe that because they agreed to meet their assailant, accepted a ride, stopped for a casual conversation, or allowed someone into their home, they are to blame for the assault. Being raped by someone you know does not alter the fact that a rape has occurred. It's important to remember that the rapist, not the victim, is responsible. No one asks for such violence or deserves to be raped.

If you were assaulted by someone you know, you may have some special concerns.

- *You may find people less likely to believe you.*
- *You may find others less likely to understand what has happened to you.*
- *You may doubt your ability to judge others.*
- *You may find it difficult to trust others.*
- *You may be concerned about having to see your assailant again and you may be concerned about how you will react.*
- *You may have doubts about telling others what happened to you even though you want to warn others.*
- *You may have doubts about reporting the crime to the police.*

The feelings that rape survivors frequently express--shame, guilt, fear, disbelief--are often stronger in the case of acquaintance rape.

Acquaintance rape may be even more misunderstood than stranger rape. Because of this, you may be less likely to seek the help and support you need.

I am an undocumented resident...

You may have come to the emergency room for treatment for the physical injuries that you received during a sexual assault. You need to know that:

- *The medical information you give to the nurse and doctor is confidential.*
- *No medical information can be given to police without your signature on Sexual Assault Medical Evidence Collection forms;*
- *The hospital staff cannot ask about your citizenship or deport you;*
- *Your undocumented status cannot be discussed or reported by the hospital staff.*

Emergency rooms are required by state law to report all violent

crimes to law enforcement. Some hospitals will not contact law enforcement until you have left the Emergency Room. In some cases, however, it may be done immediately and police may arrive while you are still at the hospital.

You may wish to report the crime to police for many reasons. However, you are entitled to immediate medical treatment. If you choose not to report the crime, you will not be eligible for financial reimbursement of medical expenses through Crime Victims' Compensation.

If you have concerns about your legal status, you may wish to contact special immigration attorneys referred to you by any of the hotlines or crisis centers listed under **Who can help me?** That section will also help you find counselors and service-providers who can speak with you in your own language.

For your own understanding the most important point to be stressed is that no one deserves to be sexually assaulted, no matter what s/he says or does or whom s/he marries. No man has the right to force himself on any woman against her will.

You may be interested in calling a rape or a battering hotline (many hotlines service survivors of both rape and battering) to talk about your feelings and discuss what you can do. You can also write for more information to the National Clearinghouse on Marital Rape 2325 Oak St., Berkeley, CA 94908 (please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope).

I believe I may have been drugged...

If you believe you may have been drugged, you should find a safe place and call a rape crisis center for information or support as soon as possible. Indicators that you may have been drugged include dizziness, confusion or other sudden and unexplained symptoms. To find the nearest toll-free rape crisis hotline, survivors can call 1-800-656-4673.

At this time you might also want to determine whether or not you want to report to the police. Should you decide to report, do not shower, bathe, douche, change clothes, or straighten up the area until the medical and legal evidence has been collected.

Contact the police and then go to the hospital to have the medical evidence collection done. Try to request a urine test for the presence of sedating substances such as Gamma Hydroxybutyrate (GHB), flunitrazepam (Rohypnol) and other drugs. Every hour matters. Chances of getting proof are best when the sample is obtained soon after the substance has been ingested.

I was assaulted by my husband...

If you were forced to engage in unwanted sexual activities with your husband or ex-husband, you need to know you have the following medical and legal rights:

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to treatment for injuries without saying who assaulted you.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to exclude anyone from the examination room, including your spouse.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to report or not to report to law enforcement.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT to receive tests for V.D. and pregnancy whether or not you choose to report to law enforcement.

Some common myths about marital rape include:

- *Sex with one's wife is a husband's*

right. (Women are seen as property belonging to men).

- *Sexual assault by one's husband isn't serious. (It's between husband and wife so others shouldn't interfere).*
- *The husband will change. (The real Joe is a sweet guy and that other nasty part won't come back again).*
- *It's a women's duty to keep the family together at all costs. (Parents must stay together "for the sake of the children".)*

Some reasons you may have submitted to sexual pressure by you husband include:

- *You believed your husband would leave you if you refused;*
- *You were subjected to physical force;*
- *You feared your husband's beating if you continued to resist;*
- *Your husband threatened to cut off money to feed your family;*

Who can help me?

Sexual assault crisis centers provide 24-hour support, counseling, information and referrals for sexual assault survivors as well as for their family and friends. Trained counselors help survivors of rape and battering deal with their feelings, make decisions about medical and legal matters and obtain needed follow-up care. Advocates are available to accompany a survivor to the hospital, to law enforcement agencies and to court. All services are free and confidential.



Sexual Assault Crisis Programs in Texas:

Crime Victim Crisis Center - **Abilene, TX**
PO Box 122 - Abilene, TX - 79604 (915-677-7895)

Family Crisis - **Alpine, TX**
PO Box 1470 - Alpine, TX - 79831 (800-834-0654)

Family Support Services - **Amarillo, TX**
1001 S. Polk - Amarillo, TX - 79101 (800-749-9026)

Women's Center of Brazoria County, Inc. - **Angleton, TX**
PO Box 476 - Angleton, TX - 77516-0476 (800-243-5788)

SafePlace - **Austin, TX**
1824 E Oltorf - Austin, TX - 78741 (512-440-7273)

Family Crisis Center - **Bastrop, TX**
PO Box 736 - Bastrop, TX - 78602 (888-303-7755)

Matagorda Co. Women's Center - **Bay City, TX**
PO Box 1820 - Bay City, TX - 77404-1820 (800-451-9235)

Bay Area Women's Center - **Baytown, TX**
PO Box 3735 - Baytown, TX - 77522 (281-422-2292)

Rape & Suicide Crisis of SE Texas - **Beaumont, TX**
PO Box 5011 - Beaumont, TX - 77706 (800-793-2273)

Rape Crisis/Victim Services - **Big Spring, TX**
PO Box 1693 - Big Spring, TX - 79721-1693 (915-263-3312)

Hutchinson County Crisis Center - **Borger, TX**
PO Box 182 - Borger, TX - 79008 (806-273-2313)

Brazos Co. Rape Crisis Center - **Bryan, TX**
PO Box 3082 - Bryan, TX - 77805 (800-922-7273)

Wintergarden Women's Shelter - **Carrizo Springs, TX**
PO Box 3082 - Carrizo Springs, TX - 78834 (800-363-9441)

Women's Shelter of Corpus Christi Area - **Corpus Christi, TX**
PO Box 3368 - Corpus Christi, TX - 78463 (512-881-8888)

The Family Place - **Dallas, TX**
PO Box 7999 - Dallas, TX - 75209-9998 (214-941-1991)

Grant Me the Freedom - **Dallas, TX**
PO Box 41247 - Dallas, TX - 75247 (972-885-6123)

Genesis Women's Shelter - **Dallas, TX**
Drawer G - Dallas, TX - 75208 (214-942-2998)

Victims Outreach - **Dallas, TX**
PO Box 515727 - Dallas, TX - 72251-5727 (214-358-5693)

Amistad - **Del Rio, TX**
PO Box 1454 - Del Rio, TX - 78841 (888-774-2744)

Denton County Friends of the Family - **Denton, TX**
PO Box 640 - Denton, TX - 76202 (800-572-4031)

Safe Place - **Dumas, TX**
PO Box 317 - Dumas, TX - 79029 (800-753-7553)

Sexual Trauma & Recovery Services - **El Paso, TX**
710 N Campbell - El Paso, TX - 79902 (915-783-6510)

The Women's Center of Tarrant County - **Fort Worth, TX**
PO Box 11860 - Fort Worth, TX - 76110 (817-927-2737)

Cooke County Friends of the Family - **Gainesville, TX**
PO Box 1221 - Gainesville, TX - 76241-1221 (940-665-2873)

Women's Resource and Crisis Center - **Galveston, TX**
PO Box 1545 - Galveston, TX - 77553 (409-765-7233)

Brighter Tomorrows - **Grand Prairie, TX**
PO Box 532121 - Grand Prairie, TX - 75053 (972-262-8383)

Family Crisis Center - **Harlingen, TX**
513 E. Jackson #209 - Harlingen, TX - 78550 (956-423-9304)

SW Family Life Center - **Hondo, TX**
PO Box 393 - Hondo, TX - 78861 (830-426-5131)

Houston Area Women's Center - **Houston, TX**
1010 Waugh Dr - Houston, TX - 77019 (713-528-7273)

FamilyTime - **Humble, TX**
PO Box 893 - Humble, TX - 77347 (281-446-2615)

SAAFE House - **Huntsville, TX**
PO Box 1893 - Huntsville, TX - 77342-1893 (409-291-3369)

Cherokee Co. Crisis Center, Inc. - **Jacksonville, TX**
PO Box 8371 - Jacksonville, TX - 75766 (800-232-8519)

Hill Country Crisis Council - **Kerrville, TX**
PO Box 1817 - Kerrville, TX - 78029-1817 (830-257-2400)

Kilgore Community Crisis Center - **Kilgore, TX**
905 Broadway - Kilgore, TX - 75662 (800-333-9148)

Families in Crisis, Inc. - **Killeen, TX**
PO Box 25 - Killeen, TX - 76540-0025 (888-799-7233)

Stop Child Abuse & Neglect Inc. - **Laredo, TX**
1208 Laredo St - Laredo, TX - 78040 (800-355-7226)

Women's Center of E. Texas - **Longview, TX**
PO Box 347 - Longview, TX - 75606 (800-441-5555)

Lubbock Rape Crisis Center - **Lubbock, TX**
PO Box 2000 - Lubbock, TX - 79457 (806-763-7273)

Family Crisis Center - **Marble Falls, TX**
PO Box 805 - Marble Falls, TX - 78654 (830-693-5600)

Midland Rape Crisis - **Midland, TX**
PO Box 10081 - Midland, TX - 79702 (915-682-7273)

Women Together - **McAllen, TX**
420 North 21st - McAllen, TX - 78501 (800-580-4879)

Comal Co. Women's Center - **New Braunfels, TX**
PO Box 310344 - New Braunfels, TX - 78131 (800-434-8013)

Rape Crisis Center - **Odessa, TX**
PO Box 7741 - Odessa, TX - 79760 (800-657-6779)

Tralee Crisis Center - **Pampa, TX**
PO Box 2880 - Pampa, TX - 79065-2880 (800-658-2796)

Family Haven - **Paris, TX**
1220 Clarksville - Paris, TX - 75460-6031 (800-444-2836)

The Bridge - **Pasadena, TX**
PO Box 3488 - Pasadena, TX - 77501 (713-473-2801)

Panhandle Crisis Center - **Perryton, TX**
PO Box 502 - Perryton, TX - 79070 (800-753-5308)

Hale Co. Crisis Center - **Plainview, TX**
PO Box 326 - Plainview, TX - 79073-0326 (806-293-7273)

Rape Crisis Center of Collin County - **Plano, TX**
PO Box 866754 - Plano, TX - 75086 (800-886-7273)

Fort Bend Co. Women's Center - **Richmond, TX**
PO Box 183 - Richmond, TX - 77406-0183 (281-342-4357)

Williamson Co. Crisis Center - **Round Rock, TX**
211 Commerce #103 - Round Rock, TX - 78664 (800-460-7233)

Assault Victim Services - **San Angelo, TX**
315 Koberlin - San Angelo, TX - 76906 (915-658-8888)

The Rape Crisis Center - **San Antonio, TX**
5835 Callaghan Road, Ste 260 - San Antonio, TX - 78228 (210-349-7273)

Hays-Caldwell Women's Center - **San Marcos, TX**
PO Box 234 - San Marcos, TX - 78667 (800-700-4292)

Crisis Center - **Sherman, TX**
PO Box 2112 - Sherman, TX - 75091-2112 (800-259-3909)

Cross Timbers Family Services - **Stephenville, TX**
PO Box 978 - Stephenville, TX - 76401 (254-965-4357)

Domestic Violence Prevention Inc. - **Texarkana, TX**
PO Box 712 - Texarkana, TX - 75504-0712 (800-876-4808)

Montgomery Co. Women's Center - **The Woodlands, TX**
PO Box 8666 - The Woodlands, TX - 77387 (409-441-7273)
Conroe (281-292-4338) Spring

East Texas Crisis Center - **Tyler, TX**
2026 Republic Dr - Tyler, TX - 75701 (800-333-0358)

Hope of South Texas - **Victoria, TX**
PO Box 2237 - Victoria, TX - 77902 (800-365-7345)

Advocacy Center for Crime Victims & Children - **Waco, TX**
201 W Waco Dr #213 - Waco, TX - 76707 (888-867-7233)

Bay Area Turning Point - **Webster, TX**
PO Box 7543 - Webster, TX - 77598-7543 (281-286-2525)

Parker County - **Weatherford, TX**
PO Box 1181 - Weatherford, TX - 76086 (817-594-0656)

First Step - **Wichita Falls, TX**
PO Drawer 4085 - Wichita Falls, TX - 76308 (800-658-2683)

**All services are free
and confidential.**

State Resource Agencies:

Texas Association Against
Sexual Assault (TAASA)
PO Box 684813
Austin, TX 78768
(512) 474-7190 or 1-888-91-TAASA

Sexual Assault Prevention and Crisis
Services
Office of the Attorney General
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548
(512) 936-1270

Texas Council on Family Violence
8701 N. Mopac, Suite 450
Austin, TX 78759
(512) 794-1133

Texas CASA (Court Appointed
Special Advocates)
512-473-2627

Children's Advocacy Center of Texas
1-800-255-4860

Texas Runaway Hotline
1-888-580-HELP

AIDS Hotline 1-800-922-2437
SIDA Hotline 1-800-222-7432

Adult Protective Services Hotline
1-800-252-5400

Child/Elderly Adult Abuse Hotline
1-800-252-5400

Suicide Prevention/Crisis Intervention
1-800-692-4039

Texas Lawyer Referral Service
1-800-252-9690

National Resource Agencies:

National Coalition Against Sexual Assault
125 N. Enola Dr.
Enola, PA 17025
(717)-728-9740

National Alliance of State Sexual Assault
Coalitions
110 Connecticut Blvd.
East Hartford, CT 06108
(860) 282-9881

Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network
Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE (will refer you to
nearest crisis center in your area)

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
1-800-787-3224 (TDD)

Bibliography

If you would like to read
about sexual assault, here
are some of the best books
in the field.

General Books:

-Brownmiller, Susan. Against Our
Will: Men, Women, and Rape. New
York: Simon & Schuster, 1975.

-Medea, Andrea, and Thompson,
Kathleen. Against Rape. New York:
Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, Inc., 1974.

-Russell, Diana E.H. The Politics of
Rape: The Victim's Perspective. New
York, Stein and Day, 1975.

Resources for Children:

-Gordon, Sol and Judith, Better Safe
than Sorry. New York: Prometheus
Books, 1984

-Anderson and Finne, Deborah and
Martha, Margaret's Story--Sexual
Abuse and Going to Court.
New York: Macmillan Children's
Group, 1986.

-Satullo and Russell, Jane A.W. and
Roberta, It Happens to Boys Too.
Pittsfield: Rape Crisis Center of the
Berkshires Press, 1992.

Resources for Adolescents:

-Irwin, Hadley, Abby, My Love. New
York: Atheneum Publishing, 1985.

-Taylor and Schulte, Mathew and
Ann Heiss, For Guys My Age: A Book
About Sex Abuse for Young Men.
Northville: Hawthorne Center, 1990.

-Lee, Sharice A., A Survivor's Guide.
Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications,
1995.

Resources for Parents:

-Byerly, Carolyn, The Mother's Book-
How to Survive the Incest of Your
Child. Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt,
1992.

-Hillman and Solek-Teft, Donald
and Janice, Spiders and Flies--Help
for Parents of Sexually Abused
Children. Old Tappan: Simon and
Schuster, 1988.

-Hagens and Case, Kathryn B. and
Joyce, When Your Child Has Been
Molested. Simon and Schuster, 1988.

Resources for Adults:

-Bear and Dimock, Euan and Peter,
Adults Molested as Children: A
Survivor's Manual for Women and
Men. Brandon: The Safer Society
Press, 1988.

-Davis, Laura, The Courage to Heal
Workbook. New York: Harper & Row,
1990.

-Lew, Mike, Victims No Longer.
Newbury Park: Harper & Row, 1994.

Resources for Professionals:

-National Research Council,
Understanding Violence Against
Women. Washington D.C. :
National Academy Press, 1996.

Contributors

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L.A. Commission on Assaults Against
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Victim-Witness Assistance Program -
County of Los Angeles

Los Angeles County District
Attorney's Office

Office of Criminal Justice Planning

Austin Police Department

Victim/Witness Division
Travis County District Attorney's
Office

Texas Crime Victims' Compensation
Division

Notes

Name of Hospital_____

Doctor_____

Nurse_____

Social Worker_____

Phone Number_____

Date First Seen_____

I need my first follow-up exam on_____

I need my second follow-up exam on_____

Name of police officers or detectives_____

Hotline Number_____

Counselor's Name_____

Date of first call_____

Crime Victims' Compensation:

Phone number_____

Name of advocate_____

Date of first call_____

Date claim was filed_____



A Survivor's Booklet

Texas Association Against Sexual Assault

---www.taasa.org

Individual copies of the Survivor's Booklet are free to sexual assault survivors and others. You may request a copy of the Survivor's Booklet by contacting TAASA either by phone (512) 474-7190 or mail:



Texas Association Against Sexual Assault
800 Brazos, Suite 1040
Austin, TX 78701

Multiple copies are also available from your nearest rape crisis center. Refer to pages 21-22 for the center closest to you.

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